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ABSTRACT

This theme issue contains articles about the importance of learning local history. The lead article includes historical information about three Iowa cities: Council Bluffs, Waterloo, and Jefferson. Other features in this issue are entitled: "Iowa Kids Talk," "Digging Into Local History," "Goldie's Top Ten News Stories"; "Boosters in Iowa"; "Take the Cemetery Home"; "Flipping Through Photos"; "Telephone Book History"; "Who's Who"; and "It's All in the Name Puzzle." (DB)

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THE Goldfinch

Iowa History for Young People

Volume 14, Number 2 Winter 1992

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DOING LOCAL HISTORY

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HISTORY MYSTERY

What is this?

It looks like a teepee. But teepees were NOT five-stories high—that's one good clue that this structure was NOT built by Plains Indians. The city of Council Bluffs built this giant "wigwam" for the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in 1898 (a BIG fair). They built it to symbolize how great Council Bluffs and Pottawattamie County were. Read more about exploring your own local history (and our examples of Council Bluffs, Jefferson, and Waterloo) in this issue of *The Goldfinch*.

The Goldfinch
Volume 14, Number 2
Winter 1992

EDPRESS

PARENTS' CHOICE AWARD

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ON THE COVER
Tyrell Gary tells Goldfinch readers what it's like to live in Waterloo, Iowa.

IN THIS ISSUE

Learn how to discover your own local history!

SPECIAL FEATURE
Local History Dictionary
Your key to understanding words and phrases throughout the issue

Goldie's Top Ten News Stories
For some ODD stories, see page 16

Hey kids, we need your help!

Readers' Survey
Answer a few questions, send them in, and win a prize. see page 30

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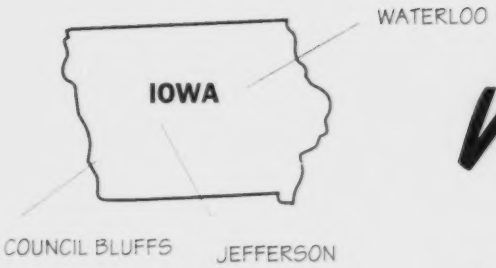


What is so Primc

IN the classic movie, "The Wizard of Oz" Dorothy clicks her ruby red slippers three times, makes a wish, and slowly spins. "There's no place like home," she says. "There's no place like home." At times, we've all felt that tug toward home. You like your room with all of your stuff. You want to hang out with your friends, family, favorite pets. Your neighborhood is okay. "Home" is more than the apartment or house where you sleep at night; it's your family, your neighborhood, and your community.

Doing local history is a way of better understanding your community. How did it get to be the way it is today? Where did the farm on the corner go? When did they tear down that old barn to build a strip mall? Where did that dweeb street name come from? By exploring your community's past, you have a better sense of your roots. The place where you live influences who you are today and who you'll be tomorrow.

Another primo reason to do local history: these days, families seem to pick up and move a lot. Maybe you've recently moved or you have friends who have left for new places to live. Doing local history helps new people feel more a part of the community. It usually begins with: how did this town start?

Local History Detectives

To find out about how a community grows, check county history books, old newspapers, and local historical societies. Chambers of commerce also have info. Here's what our local history detectives found out about how Waterloo, Jefferson, and Council Bluffs began.

Council Bluffs

"Explorers Wanted!" **President Thomas Jefferson** needed people to explore the new territory he had purchased in 1803. Explorers **Meriwether Lewis** and **William Clark** were the men appointed for the job. They led their team up the Missouri River in 1804 and stopped along the banks at a place they described as "beautiful." Lewis and Clark wanted to meet with the great Indian chiefs to tell them that the U.S. government was now their new "commander." Lewis and Clark waited for three days at that site, camped alongside the river. After the Indians came and held a great meeting, Lewis and Clark decided to call the site "Council Bluffs" for the important meeting on the hills along the river.

About Local History?

President Thomas Jefferson: (1743-1826)
the third president of the United States
and the author of the Declaration of Independence

Meriwether Lewis: (1774-1809)
an American explorer
of the Northwest

William Clark: (1770-1838)
an American explorer of the Northwest

Jefferson

Truman and May Davis and their six children arrived in what is now Greene County in 1849. They were typical farmers who came from Missouri in search of a cabin site. New settlers quickly followed, and the community grew. By the fall of 1854 people decided the community needed a name.

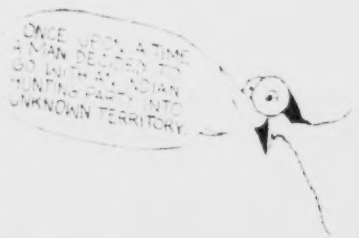
Since many of the settlers were Democrats, they decided to name the town after the most famous Democrat of all, president and author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson. Unfortunately, the post office told them that Dubuque County already had dibs on the name"Jefferson" for a town. Refusing to be discouraged, the Greene County settlers called their community "New Jefferson." When the "Jefferson" in Dubuque County didn't work out, the "New Jeffersonians" got rid of the "New" and became simply "Jefferson"

Waterloo

Waterloo began in 1845 when the family of George and Mary Hanna stopped at the east bank of the Cedar River. They called their settlement Prairie Rapids Crossing. Other families soon arrived and everyone started building cabins.

Nobody is really sure why they changed the name, but in 1851 "Waterloo" became the name. Some people say Mary Hanna had been reading about the famous **Battle of Waterloo**. She thought her new home looked a little like where the historic battle had taken place. Charles Mullen, the man who filed for the new name said that he had seen the name "Waterloo" in other states. He also said that Prairie Rapids Crossing was too long for a name. Whatever story you choose to believe, the town has been called "Waterloo" ever since.

Battle of Waterloo: a battle between
the French and the British in 1819



What is so Primo About Local History? (continued)

Promoting local heroes and businesses helped new towns to grow. In Iowa and other places, people wrote local histories to help boost the image of towns. The following stories of how our three towns grew came from centennial (100 year) books and other resources.

Council Bluffs

Mormons traveling west began to settle in Council Bluffs and in 1846 called it "Kanesville," after Thomas Kane, a man who had helped them on their journey. Gold was discovered in California in 1847 and all of a sudden it seemed as if everyone and their uncle wanted to go west and get rich. Kanesville began to develop into an important place for all those westward-bound dreamers. People coming to Kanesville could equip or "outfit" themselves for their journey. Kanesville became the place to buy wagons, shoes, rope, dried food, good horses, and even guidebooks. In 1852, most of the Mormons left and moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. Kanesville was renamed "Council Bluffs".

It's no wonder that Council Bluffs got even bigger. It was located almost exactly in the middle of the country, on a very busy river, and at the crossing points of major railroads. For anyone going west, it became hard to avoid Council Bluffs!

Mormons: religious group, followers of Joseph Smith

Waterloo

In 1853, a ferry began taking people back and forth across the Cedar River. Because getting across was so convenient, people began to build houses and start businesses on both sides. The east and west sides of the river always competed. Waterloo as a whole developed very quickly. Sawmills and flour mills became important industries. A footbridge across the river was built in 1858 and a year later the first bridge big enough for wagons was completed. In 1861 a railroad line entered the city, and then Waterloo began to REALLY grow. It boomed in the 1890s with the development of the farm **implement** business. By 1900 more than 12,580 people lived there. New factories helped Waterloo to become one of the most important cities in Iowa.

Jefferson

Churches and schools sprouted up in Jefferson as years passed and local farming became more mechanized and more productive. The railroad came to Jefferson in 1866 and opened up the town. Jefferson farmers began to sell their grain and livestock to the world. Today, Jefferson is a small city with farming as one of its most important industries.

Unsolved mysteries

Look around you. What unsolved mysteries do you see in your community? Finding out about where you live can be fun, and there are only about a million ways to do it!

- You can start by just asking around. Ask the usual experts: librarians, parents, or teachers. ("Why is Mytown called Mytown?") Ask other folks as well. (Try asking the mail carrier if any street names have changed since she has been working in your town.)
- You can check out reference books such as local histories. ("Has Mytown grown or shrunk over the years?") You can just look at the pile of old newspapers in the basement that nobody has gotten around to recycling yet.
- Your local historical society or the State Historical Society of Iowa are both places that can tell you a lot about where you live. You'd be surprised at some of the things you can find there.

This issue of *The Goldfinch* will provide you with the tools a good local history detective needs to solve those old mysteries. Read about what it is like to live in Waterloo, Council Bluffs, and Jefferson—from some kids who *know*. Uncover the past by looking at unique library and local historical society resources.

Get out your pompoms for a boosting article and zany stories pulled from local newspapers. Put on your detective hat to do some primo activities on your own local history. So if you ever get the urge to click your heels and make a wish about going home, you'll have a better understanding of your own Land of Oz.

Circle some things you probably CANNOT find at a historical society:

1. A map of your town from when there were just a couple of buildings and shops.

2. A phone book that lists your grandfather's first phone number

3. The red sock you lost in the dryer last week

4. The yearbook from when your big brother graduated (check out his picture!)

5. The town newspaper from the day you were born

6. Barbecue ribs, hot off the grill

7. Goofy buttons from political races

8. The program from a 1937 talent show contest held in your town

9. A photograph of the house that used to be right where your house is now

(Turn the page upside down for the answers.)

ANSWERS: 3 and 6

IOWA KIDS TALK

Story and photos by Millie K. Frese

COUNCIL BLUFFS

Emelia Banderas won Longfellow Elementary's fourth grade spelling bee last year when she correctly spelled G-E-O-G-R-A-P-H-Y. Besides being her winning word, geography is a subject Emelia knows something about.

"I was born in Missouri and lived in California," Emelia explains. "My family tells me all about those places, but I only *remember* Council Bluffs." Emelia also knows how far it is from Council Bluffs to Mexico—a route this 10 year old has already traveled three times.

"My father was born in Mexico," said Emelia. Her grandparents, many of her aunts, uncles and cousins still live there, between **Mexico City** and **Guadalajara**.

Being from two cultures, says Emelia, makes her feel special. "I have the language and way of life of my mom's American culture, and I have the skin color of Mexicans," she describes. "I like learning about my Mexican background from my dad."

Emelia's father, Raphael, works at a food company in Omaha and her mother, Peggy, is a cook at a hospital in Council Bluffs. She also has a brother, José, who is 12. If you ask her what's most important in her life, Emelia immediately responds with one word: family.

Emelia hopes her relatives in Mexico will someday come to visit Council Bluffs. She wants to show them all the things she likes about her city.

"I'll take them to Manawa Park to swim in the lake and play on the sand beaches," she begins. Sunset Park, the swimming pool, and her school are also on her list of places to show them. So are a few unlikely spots—like the Laundromat.

"They'll be amazed to see *machines* do the work," says Emelia. In Mexico, she compares, women do the wash in big tubs of water using bars of laundry soap, or on stones in a river.

Grocery stores, the mall, and the library would complete the tour.

Emelia describes Council Bluffs as a place where people can feel safe because "neighborhoods are small enough that you know many people."

Mexico City: the capital of Mexico

Guadalajara: a city in Mexico, say it GWA-DA-la-hara

ABOUT THEIR COMMUNITIES

If you're in Jefferson in the summertime looking for Dustin Briggs, try the swimming pool. He'll probably be there, practicing the events he swims competitively—25-meter butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle. He's a local celebrity among swimming fans, having won the conference championship in his age group two years in a row.

If 11-year-old Dustin's not in the pool, try one of Jefferson's four baseball diamonds. Or he might be on the football field. If he could be mayor of Jefferson for a day, Dustin says he would appoint kids as teachers and have them teach everyone how to play sports.

Along with the recreational activities Jefferson offers, Dustin says his town is known for the annual Bell Tower Festival. Located on the town square, the tower is 162 feet high. "You can see everything in town—and past town—from up there!" Dustin says. There are games, rides, and contests. Dustin's favorite attraction (next to a ride up the bell tower) is baseball card shows.

Dustin, a fifth grader whose favorite subjects are health and science, wants to be a doctor someday so he can help kids like himself who suffer from asthma and allergies. If not a doctor, he wants to be a swmmer.

Born in Iowa City, Dustin moved with his family to Jefferson on his fifth birthday. He likes the community, describing Jefferson as a "safe and friendly place to live." His father, David, is an agricultural education instructor. His mother, Anita, is a marketing coordinator. Dustin also has a brother, David, 13, who he says he "gets along with pretty well—sometimes."

"You can see everything in town—and past town—from up there!" says Dustin.

Dustin likes Jefferson well enough that he might want to live there the rest of his life—unless he decides to move to Florida to live near an ocean.

JEFF FITLOW

IOWA KIDS TALK ABOUT THEIR COMMUNITIES (CONTINUED)

WATERLOO

The worst thing about living in Waterloo, says Tyrell Gary, is that when summer vacation's over, you have to go back to school. He smiles. Then he tells about all the things he likes about his school, McKinstry Elementary.

"I played the violin in the orchestra last year," Tyrell, a fifth grader, begins. "This year I'm in band learning trombone. Next year it's going to be drums."

He likes math and social studies, too. Basketball games in the park, swimming, bike riding, and football are some of the things Tyrell and his friends like to do for fun.

Though Tyrell was born in Waterloo and has lived there all his life, he's just as comfortable in the country as in the city

"I like hunting and fishing with my dad," Tyrell says, listing rabbits, squirrels, and pheasants as his favorite wild game.

"We're going to hunt pheasant to eat for Thanksgiving." Tyrell has hunted with his father for as long as he can remember. Safety is always a high priority.

"I always wear a bulletproof vest in case another hunter hears me move but can't see me," Tyrell explains.

Tyrell won't reveal all his favorite fishing spots. All he'll say is, "*Sometimes* we fish at Diamond Lake in Cedar Rapids. I like fishing for bluegill and walleyes."

Then his eyes light up as he remembers his best catch, stretching his arms wide to demonstrate its size.

"I caught a big ol' catfish that took up the whole cooler!" he exclaims.

Fishing is a year-round sport for Tyrell and his family. "We have a tent that will float if the ice breaks," he begins. "My dad drills five holes in the ice in front of it. We catch a lot of fish!"

"I caught a big ol' catfish that took up the whole cooler!" exlaims Tyler.

Tyrell's family includes his parents, James (who works in construction) and Felicia (who works at home), three brothers, and two sisters. His grandparents also live in Waterloo. "My grandfather is a plumber. I like to help him after school and in the summer," Tyrell says. Tyrell wants to go to college and become an artist and a mechanic when he's older.

His advice to kids: "Everyone should work hard," he concludes, "to do well in whatever they want to do."

Digging Into Local History

History doesn't always come from books. You can find it in newspapers, letters, diaries, objects, buildings, and cemeteries. Take a look. . .

Crossing the country in a covered wagon was not easy or cheap. People needed to buy supplies that would last them for many months. In addition to regular supplies such as food and clothing, travelers needed good horses, good wagons, and frying pans. All of these supplies could be bought in Council Bluffs, which advertised itself as the "Outfitter of the West."

Many pioneers who wanted to go to Oregon or California to start a new life, often began their trips in Council Bluffs. They would buy their supplies there, join up with other travelers, or just rest before crossing the Missouri River to go west.

One spring morning I was going to Burlington with an ox team. I met a train of emigrants bound for Oregon. . . . I knew most of the parties and they knew me. This party was known as the Butler train and consisted of old Peter Butler and his son and several daughters. . . . There were young men, several that had been playmates of mine. . . . It was Ira Butler that wanted me to go with him. . . . His son Nute and his daughter Parradine had been school mates of mine.

We reached Council Bluffs just thirty days from Burlington. This place at that time was called Kanesville. At that time it was but a small village, but with many log cabins that had been built by the Mormons. They had wintered here and outfitted for their journey to Salt Lake. Here we stayed for several days as the ferry boat had not yet come up the river.

During this stop several thousand emigrants had arrived; covered wagons, tents, and stock as far as you could see covered the Missouri River bottom. Council Bluffs was only a city during emigrant season, and then deserted, only a few [people] remaining to guard stores and warehouses. While the travel of emigrants was congregating here, all kinds of gambling was in full blast. Finally the boat arrived and we had to drive about twelve miles up the river on account of high water. We were among the first to pull out and were not long detained in crossing.

Here's a story one traveler wrote about his trip west. In 1853 G.M. West joined a wagon train bound for Oregon. He was only 17 years old, but accompanied some Iowa neighbors to help with the livestock. He described Council Bluffs as a wild and strange place.

ox team: oxen that pull a plow or wagon

emigrants: people who leave one place to settle in another

Ask Yourself

Digging Into Local History (continued)

Take a look at three articles and a photo we took from Jefferson's newspaper, *The Jefferson Bee*. This page was called "The Quill." It was written in 1970 by Jefferson High School students and was included with the regular newspaper.

The Quill

Sue and Peg, students at Jefferson High School in 1970, took the same classes. Which one is Sue? Which one is Peg? Can you guess from the clues below? We can't decide.

JEFFERSON 50129

Sue and Peg share identical courses, live in different worlds

Sue Wilcox and Peg Whiteley gave some extremely interesting information about themselves—to be put exclusively into THE QUILL!

Sue and Peg both take English IV, French III, **sociology** and speech in school. From here on, each goes into her own special world.

Sue begins her activities of cheerleading, Pep Club, Student Council, and secretary of the Senior Class.

Sue says, "As far as school goes, I hope to attend the University of Denver. My other plans . . . it's really hard to tell! I also hope to graduate!"

Peg Whiteley's world includes singing in the choir, playing clarinet in the band, working as a waitress at Schall's, and being a pompom girl.

Peg's hobby is R.R. White [her boyfriend]. Unnecessary separation is the one thing she can't stand!

Peg plans to "go to school at American Beauty School—then get married!"

sociology: the study of groups of people

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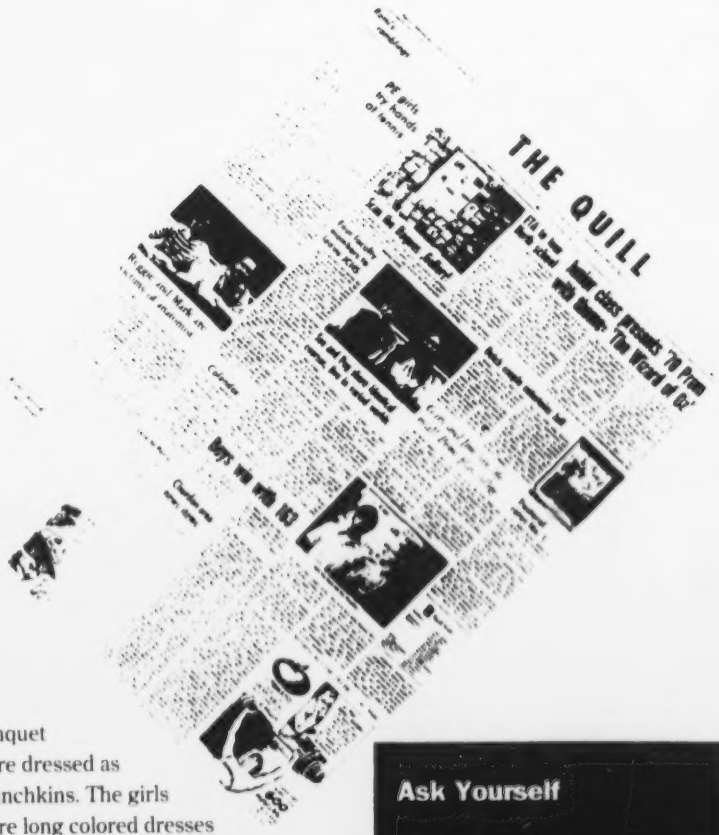
Jeff observes Earth Day

Wednesday, April 22, was Earth Day at Jefferson High School—as well as all over the United States.

To observe the day several students worked on posters and bulletin boards. Jackie Miles put posters along the halls with snappy sayings such as "Want to do something for your country? Clean your locker."

Several classes observed the Day by discussing pollution during class. In Junior English the students were asked to write their ideas and present them to the class.

Also there were individuals who went around the halls picking up papers. Joyce Hastings, who lives three miles from school,walked to school; this took 55 minutes. Joyce Batcheller had a birthday and was presented a mud cake, saying "Happy Irthday, Joyce."


THE QUILL

Junior class presents '70 Prom with theme: 'The Wizard of Oz'

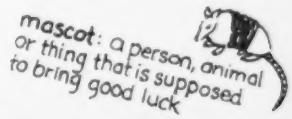
The junior class presented "The Wizard of Oz" on Saturday evening, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. in the gym and theater. . . . The servers for the banquet were dressed as munchkins. The girls wore long colored dresses and white aprons and bonnets. The boys wore green vests and hats and white pants and shirts.

The menu was served by the munchkins. It consisted of Filet of Lion Loin (pork loin), Munchkin Spuds (baked potatoes), Kansas Kernels (corn), Emerald Salad (Jello salad), Toto Biscuits (hot bread), Ozzie's Special (milk), Wicked Witch's Brew (coffee) and Dorothy's Delight (ice cream dessert).

Ask Yourself

Digging Into Local History (continued)

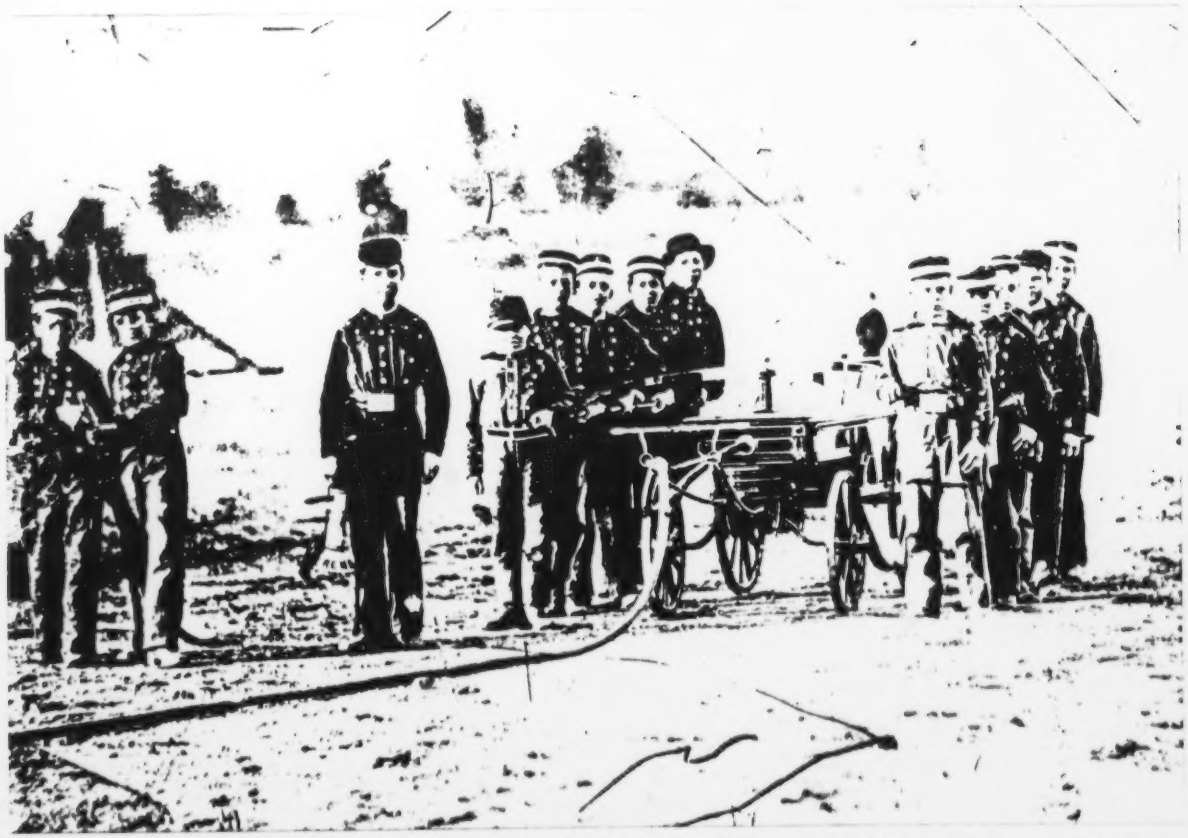
Local museums, historical societies, and libraries are full of community history. Just look at what we discovered at the Grout Museum in Waterloo:



Tongues of fire shoot through a window and a man screams. People start running and calling for help. The volunteer fire fighters come running. They aren't all alike, however, for among the tall men busily pumping water and breaking down doors are a couple of smaller fire fighters. . . much smaller.

The Hope Boys Juvenile Fire Department of Waterloo was not just a club or fundraising group. Back in 1879 when most buildings were made of wood, fires were even more dangerous than they are now. When a fire broke out, everybody was needed to help and the Hope Boys actually stood side-by-side with the adults to fight fires. When the alarms went off, the Hope Boys would jump out of bed, or even run out of their classrooms to help. They had their own miniature water pumper called the Water Lily. The Hope Boys were 12 to 17 years old, had their own uniforms and even their own mascot: a bulldog. During parades, six white Shetland ponies pulled the Water Lily down the street accompanied by the proud boys dressed all in red.

Ask Yourself



Grand Museum

The Hope Boys to the rescue! Yes, Waterloo boys helped fight fires in the 1870s. (Check out their uniforms!) Can you find any photographs of kid organizations in your town?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Newspapers can be a great source of local history. Not only do they tell the daily world news, but they also report the BIG news around town. Some of the following events made local headlines. And some of these events were found in local histories—also rich in fun facts. From Council Bluffs, Waterloo, and Jefferson, here is Goldie's Top 10 list of TRUE weird stories.

10. In Waterloo, the east and west sides of the river fought over a proposed library. In 1903, Andrew Carnegie gave $40,000 to the town for a new library. The mayor suggested building a mid-river library—on a new bridge. Common sense won over, however, and the two sides of town split the money and each built a library.

9. In 1939, Jefferson experienced a telephone war after the Jefferson Telephone Company consolidated. Many customers removed their phones to protest the extra charge to call nearby towns after 35 years of free service. During the time without phones, boys on bicycles carried messages between merchants in Jefferson.

8. On Halloween 1903, Council Bluffs Police Chief Richmond questioned a group of troublesome boys. Instead of punishing them, he decided to give them a job. He began a 25-member boy police squad. Each boy received a gold star and a club just like adult officers. But the boy police had a special job. They prevented other boys from doing what they shouldn't do. Twenty-five new boys were selected each year. Hundreds of boys showed up hoping to be chosen.

7. In 1897, a curfew was put into effect in Jefferson. All children under 18 years old were not allowed to be on the streets or in public places after 9 P.M. from March 1 to August 31 and after 8 P.M. the rest of the year unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. If parents allowed children out after the curfew without a reason, they could be fined $10. A policeman could arrest any child out after the curfew.

6. In November 1920, one of the biggest mail train robberies took place in Council Bluffs. Four youths stole about $3.5 million. A seven-car train traveling east on the Burlington Railroad contained government bonds and cash. The youths were caught, but not all of the money was found. Some of it burned and some of it was thrown into the river.

Art by Mary Moye-Rowley

5. During the Fourth of July celebration in 1861, two full infantry companies drilled for a crowd of people in Jefferson before leaving for battle in the Civil War. Several men had no boots, so they blackened their bare feet to create the illusion that they were wearing boots.

4. In the early days, cows roamed the streets of Waterloo until a Mrs. Leavitt, disapproving of "cows at large in town," led a petition drive to get the animals off the streets. The petition became law in 1871. It did not allow animals to "run at large between the hours of 9 P.M. and 4 A.M. under a penalty of $10.

In 1925, five bandits tried to crack a safe in the Farlin Savings Bank in Jefferson. The robbers first **3.** cut the telephone lines running east, west, and north of the bank, but they forgot to cut the south line. Then they tried to blow open the safe with explosives. The explosion wrecked the bank vault door, woke the townspeople, but didn't open the safe. Even though most of the people couldn't use their phones, one man on the south line called the sheriff. The sheriff arrived just in time to nab the robbers.

2. An enormous flood in Waterloo in July 1902 proved the need for a new sewer. The Dry Run Sewer project was built as a result. In order to celebrate the event, a banquet was held in the newly completed sewer in October 1903. The underground banquet took place in a block-long section of the sewer between Wellington and Randolph streets. Guests drank Dry Run Punch and were entertained by an orchestra and a singing group.

In 1870, a new brick high school was built in Council Bluffs. **1.** However, students and the public complained about the location. The school was built on a hill between Fifth Avenue and High School Avenue. "Many students have been forced to quit school from too much high climbing," said one man. One merchant's ad in a high school yearbook suggested using parachutes to descend the hill. Four students survived the daily climb up the hill and became the first graduating class of 1874.

Ask Yourself

❶ Why do you think people thought these stories were important enough to record?

❷ What are some tales about your town that you can turn into news stories?

What turns normal people into strange cheerleaders?

Boosters in Iowa

High school girls in their flower-petal dresses stroll down Jefferson streets for May Day Festivals

People in Council Bluffs built a giant five-story teepee in 1898, complete with electric lights. Business leaders in Waterloo held a fancy dinner in an underground sewer. Jefferson folks threw a big ground-plowing contest. What made grown-ups do these strange things? For the answer, a young historian needs to examine boosterism.

To "boost" for your home town means to cheer, or even brag about where you live. Community leaders like to boost their city in order to attract new people, businesses, and money.

In the late 1800s, many people in Iowa wanted their cities to grow and prosper. They started booster clubs where people could meet and talk about ways to improve their cities. Since every city is different, boosters were interested in telling people what was so special about their home. Boosters bragged about how good the local schools were, how hard-working the local people were, and how beautiful the area was. Most of all, boosters would talk about

Ya gotta have a gimmick

One good way to boost your city is to have a special event or festival. Nowadays Council Bluffs has a re-enactment of Lewis and Clark's visit. Jefferson holds a Bell Tower Festival which features bed races and corn throwing contests. Waterloo chooses a week called "MY WATERLOO DAYS" in which people fly hot air balloons, race canoes, and chow down in eating contests.

Over the years, Iowa has seen zillions of other events. Some were one-time events, some became yearly traditions, while others were left behind in dusty record books. Which ones would you have wanted to attend??

•TRANS-MISSISSIPPI AND INTERNATIONAL EXPO—It's a mouthful, but in 1898 Council Bluffs helped the city of Omaha sponsor this five-month-long fair. Hundreds of special stages and buildings were built. Thousands of Indians representing

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how much *potential* their city had. Every booster wanted their city to grow as rich and important as Chicago or New York City.

Special stunts and fairs

In order to boost their hometowns, many silly and serious ideas were developed. Some cities tried to advertise themselves by special stunts, fairs, or festivals (*see below*). A number of cities tried to give themselves nicknames that everyone would remember. Some nicknames don't sound so great today. Waterloo proudly called itself "The City of One Hundred Smokestacks" and "The Factory City." Business leaders went around boasting that "The Waterloo Way Wins." Other nicknames are more recent. Jefferson calls itself "The City On The Rise." Today Council Bluffs likes to be known as "The Black Squirrel Capital of the World." Many booster clubs sponsored pamphlets and books to explain why their hometown was a wonderful place. One book about Council Bluffs bragged that it was: "one of the finest cities of one of the greatest states of the grandest country on the face of the globe!"

The finest, greatest, grandest. . .

Phwew! Historians learn to be careful around that kind of enthusiasm. In order to boast about how great their city was, some boosters would **exaggerate** Sometimes boosters thought they could attract more people to move to their hometown by saying that their town was bigger, or cleaner, or more modern than it actually was. The best way to check information you suspect may have been exaggerated is to compare sources.

People were proud of their cities and wanted everyone to know it. Boosterism worked. Cities all across Iowa grew in population and attracted new businesses, thanks to a different kind of cheerleading.

exaggerate: to make something seem larger or greater than it really is

Ask Yourself

different tribes formed encampments around the grounds. Displays of everything from farm machines to zoo animals were set up. Everything was designed to entertain visitors and to demonstrate the greatness of the western U.S.—especially Omaha and Council Bluffs.

• MAY DAY FESTIVALS—In the early 1900s, Jefferson held parades in which the local high school girls would dress up like flowers and stroll down the streets.

• A PRAIRIDRAMA—This show had more than 1,250 people acting out the history of Waterloo! The 1954 bash included a big bang ending that simulated the explosion of an atomic bomb. They also held a beard-growing contest.

• AN AGRI-RAMA—Jefferson proudly sponsored an event with all sorts of ground-breaking plow races in 1966.

simulated: made to look like, imitated

TAKE THE CEMETERY HOME

AN OUTSTRETCHED HAND THRUSTS OUT OF THE GROUND. AN EERIE GREENISH GLOW HOVERS ABOVE A GRAVE. A FULL MOON. A WOLF HOWLS. AAAAAAA!

Cemeteries during the day, though, are actually beautiful places. And to a local historian, cemeteries are places that are filled with information they cannot get anywhere else. A true historian doesn't think cemeteries are that creepy either. After all, cemeteries are filled with good feelings. Gravestones are not put up out of sadness. Usually they are put up out of love.

Gravestones often have pictures, designs, or words on them that can tell you about the time that person lived. Sometimes gravestones are very simple, just a name and date. But sometimes they will tell you a lot about that person's life ("Jonas, beloved son of Hannah and Peter Johansson, died in the Pacific in 1944"). You may see a poem or a saying from the Bible. Sometimes the pictures on gravestones are beautiful or strange. Look at the names of people and see if you can notice any patterns. Can you see the gravestones of whole families? Did many people seem to die during the same time? Why might that be?

To make a gravestone rubbing, you need:

1. A large piece of paper (the thinner the better)
2. A big fat crayon, pencil, or stick of artist's charcoal
3. Some masking tape

Tape the paper over the side of the gravestone you want. Now rub the side of your crayon, pencil, or charcoal gently across the paper. You should see the design or words that are carved into the stone, begin to appear. Sometimes by creating rubbings, you can see things you couldn't see before. It's almost . . . SPOOKY.

Flipping Through Photos

You visit your grandparent's house. Flipping through a dusty photo album, you come across some cool old pictures. What do you see? Test your powers of concentration below.

Look at the photo for 30 seconds and turn the page! Answer the questions about what you saw.

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Flipping Through Photos *(continued)*

By looking at clues in old photos you can figure out a lot about where, why, and what the pictures were about. Sometimes these clues are easy. A date might be written on the back, or it's a birthday party photo and you can see how many candles are on the cake. Sometimes the clues are harder. Look at the style of clothes or buildings in the photo. To be an expert historian, you need to look as carefully as you can at the important and unimportant things in a picture.

Everyone looks at photos differently. Here's what Jessica Bergman, 10, had to say about this photograph: "I see little kids—could be twins—with pets. I like pictures of kids and I like pets. I thought it was cute and I like animals and little kids. They could have gotten together to do a pet show. What do you think?"

A historian's point of view

Historians like to ask questions before they even look at the photo. Questions like:

"Who took this photo? Where did this photo come from? Was it in an attic? Who's attic? Is there are date on the back?"

Then a historian looks at the details of the picture.

"What's the occasion? Is that a Christmas tree in the background? What are they sitting on? Is that a bench? It seems awfully high up Maybe it is some sort of saw horse."

"Can I tell how old it is from the clothes?"

Some clues to look at

- The shoes are high-top, lace-up shoes. These shoes were common around 1900.
- The three boys are all wearing short knickers instead of pants. This was also common around 1900.
- This photo shows three boys and one girl. Many boys used to wear their hair in ringlets when they were small. So the boy with the curls (last on left) is probably younger than the other boys.
- The girl is probably wearing a play smock over her dress to keep it from getting dirty.

The next time you see an old photo, try looking at it as a local historian not as a local

You've ordered a large pizza with sausage and you've just put down the phone. You're about to close the phone book and put it away. BUT WAIT! This is an excellent moment to conduct a historical investigation before your pizza arrives.

A historian like yourself can find out quite a lot from new and old phone books, and we don't just mean the number of that cute kid in your science class. A phone book can tell you about what kinds of people live in your community, and what their lives might be like.

❶ Just for starters, try sitting on it. How much taller does it make you? Three inches, four inches? The thicker the book, that larger your community.

❷ Now look up "Smith." Do you have a lot of people with the same last names? Looking at names can tell you about the ethnic make-up of your town. If you have a lot of "Kims" you may have a large Korean-American community nearby. If you have a lot of "McGuires," perhaps you live near a lot of Irish-American families. If you look at a really old phone book in your library or historical society, you can check to see if the names were the same then. Did a lot of people with similar last names begin to get telephones at the same time? Maybe at that time there was a lot of immigration to your town.

❸ Check out the addresses. Do people with the same type of last names live near each other? Have the names of the people in these neighborhoods changed? There were a lot of Muellers on the north side of town in 1935, for example. But now that area is full of Nguyens (pronounced "win"). Have several Cambodian families recently moved there?

❹ And then there are the Yellow Pages. . . chock full o' history. Just look at the ads. You can find out where to order a pizza and you can also find out how old that pizza parlor is. Many advertisements say things like "founded in 1960" or "serving you proudly since 1890." Can you find an advertisement that says it's a "family business?" How long do you think they've been around?

❺ From the ads, you can tell what kinds of businesses your town has. Notice any trends? Do you have a lot of hotels? Maybe your town attracts tourists. Have there always been computer stores around? Think about it.

P.S. Don't forget to tip the pizza person.

WHO'S WHO

When you start to do local history, you always come across interesting people from the past and present. Here are a few we found who lived in Waterloo, Council Bluffs, and Jefferson.

Capitol Records

NAME: Tracie Spencer
LIVED: 1977-present
DESCRIPTION: Singing her heart out on MTV with songs like "Save Your Love" and "This Time Make It Funky" from her album, Make the Difference
KNOWN TO SPEND TIME IN: Waterloo, where she grew up singing with her father and her brother, "Sir Spence." Tracie used to spend hours and hours in her room singing. Her first real audience was at the Iowa State Fair when she was 10 years old. She won the Sturgis Falls Competition.
KNOWN FOR: Being a fantastic teenage singing star.
LAST HEARD SAYING: "Since I'm an old lady of 15 now, don't anyone dare call me cute anymore. . . I'm bad now!"

NEA

NAME: Amelia Jenks Bloomer
LIVED: 1818-1894
DESCRIPTION: Wearing a short full skirt with a pair of loose pants gathered tightly around her ankles
KNOWN TO SPEND TIME IN: Council Bluffs. She moved there in 1855 and although she traveled widely, she always considered Council Bluffs her home.
KNOWN FOR: Supporting women's rights and the temperance (anti-alcohol) movement. She was especially famous for popularizing the clothing known as "bloomers," baggy pants worn underneath a shorter skirt.
LAST HEARD SAYING: "Give [a woman] her rights and her own good sense will teach her how to use them."

NEA

NAME: George Horace Gallup
LIVED: 1901-1984
DESCRIPTION: Over six feet tall and known for his questioning mind
KNOWN TO SPEND TIME IN: Jefferson, where he sold milk from six cows his father gave him. He used the money to buy uniforms and equipment for his school's football and basketball teams.
KNOWN FOR: Popularizing the scientific opinion poll, the Gallup Poll. He founded the American Institute of Public Opinion in 1935 and has been asking questions ever since in order to find out what people are thinking about.
LAST HEARD SAYING: "People now have a chance to have their views known."
"Name? Address? Occupation?"

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It's All in the Name Puzzle

It was a Cold Spring when Louisa visited Paris. . .

Class is about to start. You notice the new kid next to you. You try not to stare. You wonder what his name is. He looks like a fun kid. . . Bart, yah, like Bart Simpson. The teacher introduces him as "Earvin." You suppress a giggle. Maybe, his nickname is—Magic?

You see, names ARE important. Names can tell you about a place or a person. Names can also give you ideas or impressions. Names of places sometimes describe what they look like. That's why names sometimes change. Discovering the history of names can tell you about your local history. What's the name of the place you live in?

Does it describe what the environment looks like: Cold Springs, Fertile, Strawberry Point, Waterville, Lone Tree?

Or is it the name of a person or a people: Washington, Louisa, Pocahontas, Sioux City, Fredericksburg, Scotch Grove, Swedesburg?

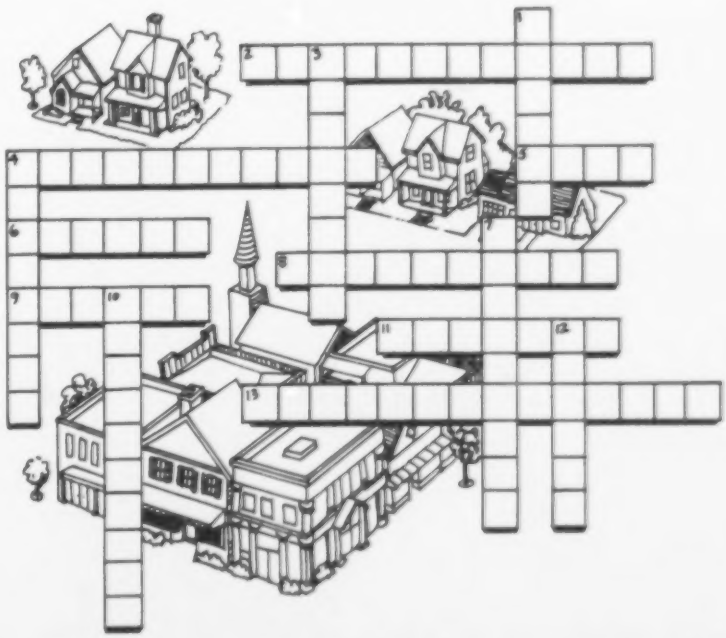
Maybe it's named after another place: California Junction, Paris, Norway, East Peru, Moscow, Jamaica?

Perhaps it's from different Indian languages: Ottumwa ("rumbling water"), Seneca ("place of stone"), Washta ("good"), Nodaway ("snakes")?

Or from other languages: Belle Plaine (French for "beautiful plain"), Amana (German for "remain faithful"), Eldorado (Spanish for "land of gold")?

Maybe it's something completely different: Cylinder, Coin, What Cheer, Diagonal, Independence, Thor, Hopeville?

See if you can do the crossword puzzle on this page. The answers are in this column!



Psst! This crossword puzzle is full of names of Iowa towns. You can find all the answers in the list to the left.

ACROSS:

2. Freedom
4. Chilly water
5. Metal money
6. If Louis is a boy's name, a girl's name might be _____
8. A wet town?
9. Norwegians are from there
11. An Indian word for "noisy water"
13. Frederick's hometown?

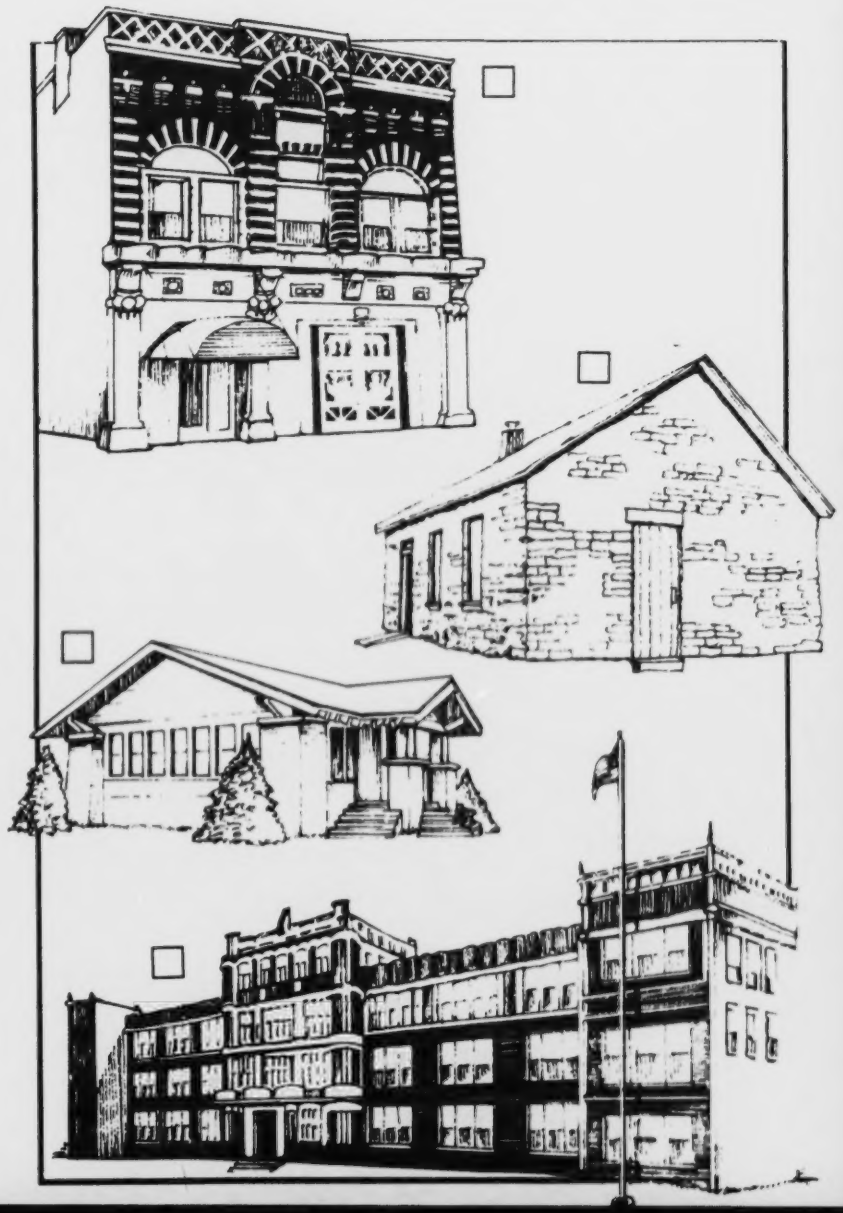
DOWN:

1. An Indian word for "a stony place"
3. Slanted
4. Nobody in this town is a square
7. It sounds like a place where "Sue" might want to live.
10. The first president of the United States
12. It sounds like everybody in this town washes a lot.

by Barbara Beving Long

Look at the style of buildings in your town. They've gone through lots of changes over the years. Many buildings are altered over the years. But architectural styles change, too, not as quickly as fashion trends, but slowly over decades.

Let's take a look at three types of buildings in Waterloo where people lived, worked, and went to school. Imagine you are listening to the radio and hearing the voices of people who lived, worked, or went to school in these buildings. Read their words and match the quotes to the building type.



This activity is adapted from *I Know that Building! Discovering Architecture with Activities and Games* by Jane D'Alelio (Preservation Press/National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1989).

Match these quotes to the drawings of buildings.

❶ "Our porch was small, but looked out on the street. My grandpa and I sat on the porch and watched spiders make webs on the bumpy parts of the porch columns."

❷ "My parents built a house with a wide overhang roof which helped keep everything shaded in summertime."

❸ "Our stone school used to be a mile out of town, but now the town has grown out around it. We didn't have a bell tower so when recess was over, our teacher had to stand outside the door and ring a cow bell."

❹ "My sister and I began high school in the 1920s. Our school was so big that at local football games they never had enough tickets. Our flagpole was giant—even taller than our school."

❺ "My uncle was a volunteer firefighter and used to go to meetings in the engine house. The building had two stories so that there was sleeping and meeting spaces above, while the hourses and equipment were kept below. You'd never know it was a firestation because it had such pretty stripes around each window."

❻ "My grandfather used to take the wagon to the fancy bank building. You could tell Waterloo was an important town because the bank looked like a castle. It had arches and little towers on top."

Illustrations by Mary Moye-Rowley

HISTORY BUFFS TO THE RESCUE

We first heard about the story below from a story on a Waterloo television station.

Hearing that one of Iowa's most famous historic sites might be closed because of lack of funds, some Iowa kids took action last summer. Overlooking the northeastern town of Clermont, the Montauk historic site was built in 1874 by our 12th governor, William Larrabee. He filled this elegant 14-room mansion with furnishings from around the world.

Kids from the Windfield Summer Session in Cedar Falls thought that they could make and sell a quilt to help save Montauk. The quilt was designed and constructed by the group in an attempt to keep Montauk open. The quilt will be raffled off with all of the money going to the Clermont Historical Society. "It's important that other children see those things," said student Whitney McGinn. "We want to keep it open."

100,000 Pines

Each square in the quilt represents something from or about the Larrabee house. "We're making this quilt to keep Governor Larrabee's mansion open," said Leslie Montz, "because we like it and so our parents can see it." Nicole Corbett made a seashell design in honor of Anna Appelman Larrabee's seashell collection. Ben Bottke sewed a square with a picture of one of Governor Larabee's canes. Matthew Emerson used a pine tree to represent one of the 100,000 pine trees on the 46-acre estate.

"It's neat that they kept everything that they had in there," said Emily Rechkemmer. "I liked their home," added Heather Carlson. "I could live there."

Montauk remains open thanks to the concern expressed by the public statewide, support from Clermont community members, and the efforts of these young history buffs.

Be a history maker! *The Goldfinch* wants to hear about your discoveries in Iowa history. If you have any stories, poems, drawings, or other projects about Iowa history, please send them to us at: History Makers, *The Goldfinch*, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240. Your chances of getting published skyrocket if your work has some connection to an upcoming issue. Our next issues will be about: corn, recreation, architecture, the environment, and the state fair.

A VISIT TO THE CEMETERY

Another reader, Paul Stone, 11, of Morena Valley, California, wrote to us about doing local history at a nearby cemetery:

On our trip to see my grandma and grandpa in Coloma, California, I asked grandpa to take me to visit the old timers' graveyard. My class at Ridge Crest Elementary is studying the **gold rush**. . . . As my mom and I were walking through the graveyard, we stopped to read some of the headstones. As we walked around I found a grave that belonged to a man who fought in the **Mexican War**, he was a private. He was born in 1823 and died in 1902. Most of the graves were sectioned off by cement and wrought-iron fences. I was surprised to see that whole families had been buried in one section. This cemetery is one of 21 cemeteries from the gold rush era. I felt that no matter where I walked I was walking on someone's grave. Grandpa said, "they won't hurt you."

As we were leaving, Mom read a plaque that said there were about 400 to 500 gold rushers who were buried in this cemetery. Most of the stones were missing, so you had to watch where you were walking. Grandpa said more than likely they were buried on top of each other because the cemetery was not very big and they didn't keep track of where anyone was buried. Mom also read that two men had been hung in the cemetery.

Grandpa told me that people came from all over the world to find the gold, most of them died at a very young age, and very few ever found gold. As we were leaving, all I could think of was, REST IN PEACE.

Gold Rush: (1848-1850s) people rushed to California to find gold during this time

Mexican War: (1836-1848) war between the United States and Mexico over the land which is now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and California

Hey kids, we need your help!

After all, we're just grown-ups. Tell us what YOU think about *The Goldfinch*. Rate the articles and activities in this issue, mail it to us at the address below, and we'll send you a free prize!

What did you think of (circle one) :

1. WHAT'S SO PRIMO ABOUT LOCAL HISTORY?
   excellent okay ugh
2. IOWA KIDS TALK:
   excellent okay ugh
3. DIGGING INTO LOCAL HISTORY:
   excellent okay ugh
4. GOLDIE'S TOP TEN NEWS STORIES:
   excellent okay ugh
5. BOOSTERS IN IOWA:
   excellent okay ugh
6. MAKE THE CEMETERY HOME:
   excellent okay ugh
7. FLIPPING THROUGH PHOTOS:
   excellent okay ugh
8. TELEPHONE BOOK HISTORY:
   excellent okay ugh
9. WHO'S WHO:
   excellent okay ugh
10. IT'S ALL IN A NAME PUZZLE:
    excellent okay ugh
11. OLD PLACES:
    excellent okay ugh

Your Name: _____

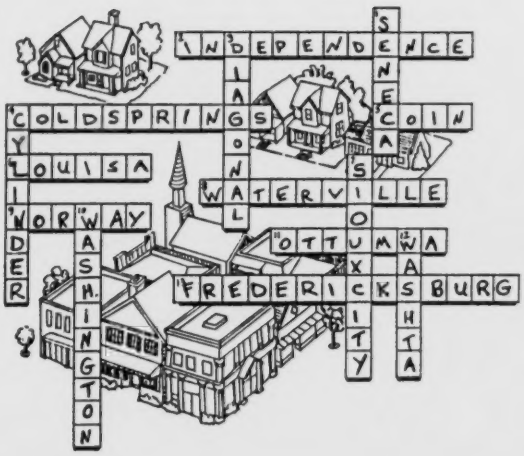
Your Address: _____

_____

Send to: GOLDFINCH SURVEY
State Historical Society of Iowa
402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1806

ANSWERS

Page 25:



Pages 26 and 27: (1) 5; (2) 3; (3) 2; (4) 4; (5)1; (6) 6

The Roost

GOLDIE! MY MOM HAS BEEN TELLING ME STORIES ABOUT HER CHILDHOOD!
HHMMMM?
DID YOU KNOW SHE ACTUALLY HAD TO CHANGE TV STATIONS BY TURNING A KNOB?
WHAT! NO REMOTE CONTROL?!
SWISH!
SHE USED TO WARM HER FOOD IN A GAS OVEN!
NO MICROWAVE?!!
SHE WROTE WITH A PENCIL AND PAPER!
NO COMPUTER ??!!!
SHE PLAYED CARD GAMES AND PINBALL!
NO NINTENDO ???!!!!
SHE EVEN WATCHED THE ORIGINAL "STAR TREK" TV SERIES WHEN IT FIRST CAME OUT!
NO "STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION" ??? !!!!
IT SURE SOUNDS LIKE A PRIMITIVE TIME TO LIVE.
PRIMITIVE! IT SOUNDS LIKE SHE COULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE FLINTSTONES!
JERRY BROWN

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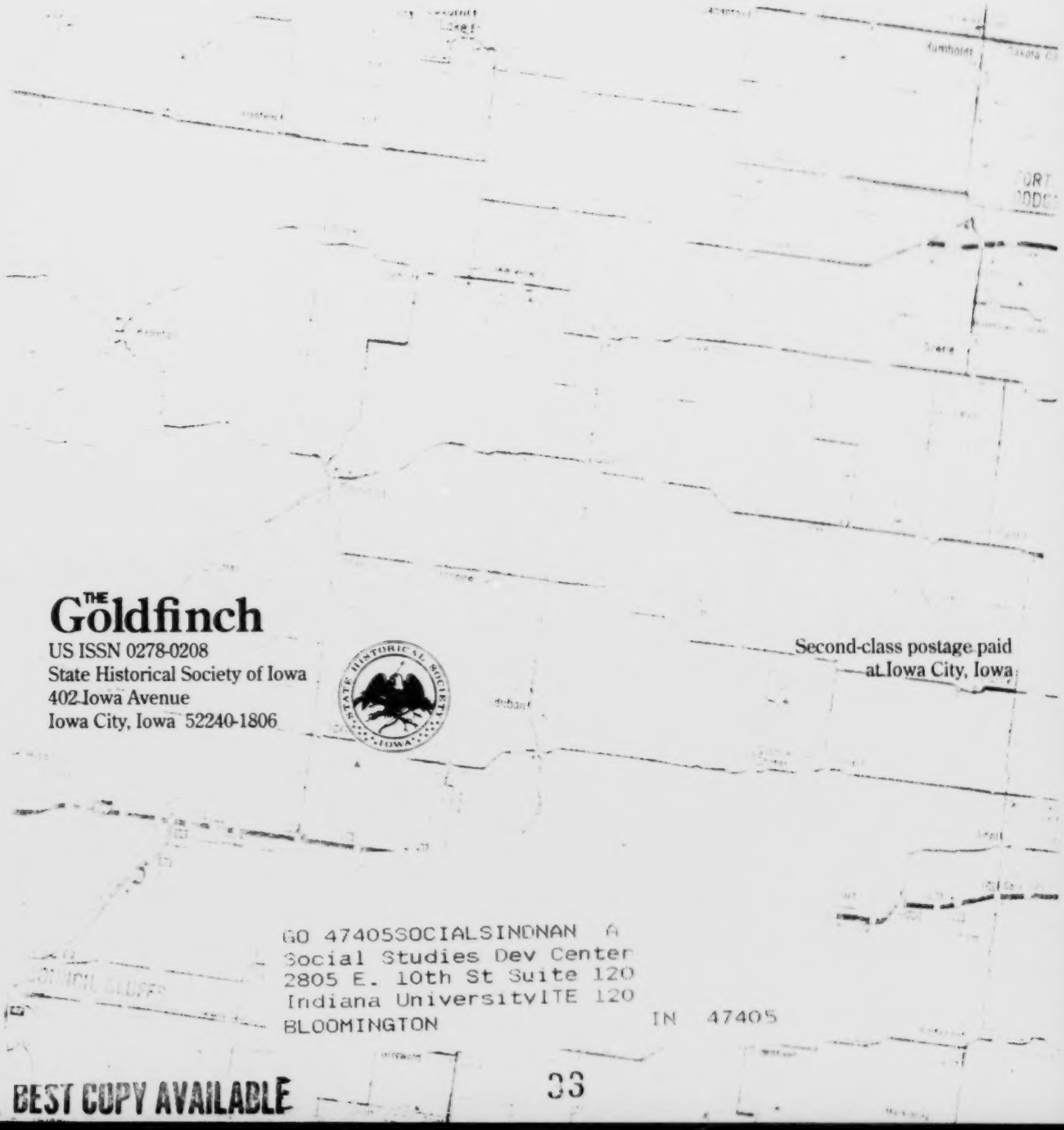

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